

April 18, 2002

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LETTER

**SOLICITATION FOR SUPPLEMENTAL PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH
COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITIES BETWEEN EXISTING REHABILITATION
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS**

1. Purpose. The Rehabilitation Research and Development (RR&D) Service currently sponsors twelve RR&D Centers. Part of the mission of the RR&D Center program is to establish a national consortium of researchers focused on veteran relevant rehabilitation issues. To facilitate this effort, collaborative research in areas of overlapping interest is encouraged and this announcement establishes a formal mechanism for funding such research.

2. Background

(a) Collaborative research involves the expenditure of intellectual capital of each participating center as well as participation in the conduct of the actual research activity. The effort is to be patient oriented, but does not need to involve human subjects.

(b) This solicitation is only open to existing RR&D Centers.

(c) Applications may request up to \$75,000 per year per proposal for up to 2 years to support the collaborative effort.

(d) Each established RR&D Center may be the lead on one funded proposal, but may submit up to three proposals for consideration.

(e) No limit is set on the number of collaborations in which a RR&D Center may participate.

(f) Eligible collaborators are RR&D Centers, RR&D Research Enhancement Award Programs (REAPs), Health Service Research and Development (HSR&D) Centers, and/or RR&D Principal Investigators with at least two funded awards.

(g) Supplemental funds may only be used for purposes of the collaborative effort. Award funds may be used for enhancement of communication systems between centers, partial Full-time Equivalent (FTE) to perform data collection and/or analysis, and equipment purchases (within confines of the \$50,000 award).

(h) Travel funds are extremely limited. However, RR&D will match up to \$750 per year in approved travel budgets. Travel funds are not available for conferences, scientific meetings, or workshops.

(i) Awards will be made to the Lead RR&D Center which will then bear the responsibility for further distribution.

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3. Letter of Intent. While no letter of intent is required, the RR&D service does require a notification of intent to be eligible to apply.

a. The notification is to be sent to Laura Bowman at the application receipt address (see par. 5) and be received no later than April 26, 2002. Include the name of the Lead RR&D Center and Principal Investigator, names of collaborators, and a brief paragraph describing the areas to be studied.

b. The notification is to be co-signed by the Principal Investigator(s) and the Associate Chief of Staff (ACOS) for Research and Development (R&D) at each Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center. Faxed signatures will be accepted. The notification will be used only for review planning purposes; applicants will not receive return notification of approval or disapproval.

4. Format. Proposals are to use the Merit Review format. However, the Narrative, Literature Cited and Appendix sections together may not exceed ten pages. The narrative should include one to two pages about existing work and one to two pages about proposed work. Submission of final approval by the local Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), or Biohazards committees may be delayed beyond the application receipt date, but must be received prior to any award of funds.

5. Proposal Submission. An original and five copies of the proposal are to be sent to:

Department of Veterans Affairs
Rehabilitation Research and Development Service (122)
1400 I Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005

6. Due Date. All proposals are to be received at this address on or before May 31, 2002.

NOTE: No extensions will be granted.

7. Review and Award. Proposals will be reviewed by June 15, 2002. Scientific merit, capability of the participants to conduct the proposed research, and suitability to the RR&D mission are the main considerations for selecting awardees. Successful applicants will receive supplemental awards on July 1, 2002.

8. Inquiries. For further information, contact Laura Bowman at (202) 408-3680, or e-mail at bowlau@mail.va.gov.

S/James F. Burris, M.D. for
John R. Feussner, M.D., M.P.H.
Chief Research and Development Officer

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